

*Streptococcus thermophilus* and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*.

Specific strains having said features are:

- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 52;
- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 46;
- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 48;
- *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 1;
- *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 3;
- *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 7;
- *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 77.

All of the above mentioned strains are deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut Pasteur, with the accession number specified in Table II.--

Page 7, lines 11-15, delete in their entirety and replace with:

--The compositions for preventing and/or treating diseases associated with or caused by an altered metabolism of bile acids according to the present invention comprise an effective amount capable of producing a normalizing effect in a patient suffering therefrom of (1) at least one gram-positive bacteria strain characterized by exhibiting: (a) a  $7\alpha$ -dehydroxylase activity of less than 50%, and (b) a bile acid deconjugation activity of less than 50%, and belonging to a species selected from *Streptococcus thermophilus* and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*; and (2) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Specific strains for the present compositions are:

- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 52;
- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 46;
- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 48;

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cont
- *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 1;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 3;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 7;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 77.--

Page 8, lines 4-6 delete in their entirety and replace with:

--The method according to the present invention for preventing and/or treating diseases caused by or associated with an altered metabolism of bile acids, comprises administering at least one gram-positive bacteria strain characterized by exhibiting: (a) a 7 $\alpha$ -dehydroxylase activity of less than 50%, and (b) a bile acid deconjugation activity of less than 50%, and belonging to a species selected from *Streptococcus thermophilus* and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*.

Specific strains for the present method are:

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- *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 52;
  - *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 46;
  - *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 48;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 1;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 3;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 7;
  - *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 77.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-36, without prejudice toward the further prosecution of these claims in a Continuation and/or Divisional Application.

Please add the following new claims: